**Soviet Union and Eastern Europe—The Soviet Bloc**

**Soviet Policies & the Sovietization of Eastern Europe**

**1945-1947: Policy of Diversity**

* **Occupied countries various degrees of independence from USSR**
* **Yugoslavia & Albania: own Communist regimes w/aggressive plans for Balkan union**
* **Poland & Romania: limited freedom, such as allowing London Poles minor role, but with Soviets keeping tight rein—resulting in communist revolutions**
* **Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Finland & Bulgaria: Soviet policy one of influence, not control**
* **Sept. 1946: Communist Information Bureau (Cominform) coordinate policies & tactics of all Communist parties in the world and take over socialist parties wherever possible**
* **Andrei Zhdanov, Stalin rep at Cominform—references to bi-polar world**

**1947: Truman Doctrine & Marshall Plan**

**1947-1955: Consolidation of the Eastern Bloc—Response to TD & MP**

* **Stalin wanted more control of his satellite countries**
* **Cominform: used to control all communist parties—theoretically independent in reality all required to have identical cultural, military, economic & social policies**
* **COMECON: Council for Mutual Economic Assistance: no real economic help until late-1950s**
* **Bulgaria: communist party eliminated opposition (Stalin okayed) & collectivized agriculture**
* **Feb. 1948—Czechoslovakia: communist coup… Jan Masaryk said “I went to Moscow as the Foreign Minister of an independent sovereign state; I returned as a lacey of the Soviet government.”**
* **Hungary: increasing cooperation between communists & Moscow resulted in Hungary going from free elections in 1945 to only communists elected to government by May 1949**
* **1949: establishment of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) better known as East Germany—Walter Ulbricht head, dedicated to formation of communist state**

**NATO & Rearming of West Germany (FRG)**

* **Stalin briefly willing to sacrifice GDR for unified, but neutral & demilitarized Germany**
* **Konrad Adenauer, Chancellor, refused proposal—committed to West**
* **Stalin abandons plan**

**USSR & Soviet Bloc Countries**

* **no formal integration**
* **series of bilateral treaties of friendship, cooperation & mutual assistance**
* **mutual defense agreements**
* **banned countries from joining hostile alliances (NATO)**
* **recognized equality, sovereignty & non-interference**

**Soviet Coercive Rule**

* **Stalin frequently called leaders of Eastern & Central European countries to Moscow**
* **direct participation of Soviet ambassadors & advisors in internal affairs of Soviet bloc countries**
* **Red Army presence**
* **Stalin’s cult of personality (special emphasis on him as liberator of Europe)**
* **command economies: collective agriculture & Five Year Plans of industrialization**

**East German Revolt, 1953**

* **mass exodus of citizens to FRG: due to forced collectivization & socialization by Ulbricht**
* **high industrial production goals + socialization + coercive methods led to series of strikes & revolts**
* **demanded increased pay, more freedoms & reforming of German Social Democratic Party (SPD), which had been absorbed into KPD (communist party)**
* **called for resignation of officials**
* **Ulbricht & GDR officials asked for Soviet assistance**
* **June 16-18: Soviet troops & tanks put down uprising**
* **Soviet military used restraint while restoring order**
* **ended any hope to unify Germany**
* **Soviets turn to consolidating GDR as committed communist state dedicated to Soviet bloc**

**Yugoslav-Soviet Split, 1948**

* **Stalin critical of Yugoslavia’s leader, Josef Tito: to play independent role in Balkans & overestimate their achievements (esp. WW II)**
* **Tito considered forming a South-eastern European federation to include Bulgaria & Greece**
* **Tito planned to establish military base in Albania**
* **Stalin worried that these moves would make Yugoslavia Communists strongest force in Balkans**
* **actions would provoke USA, especially at time of tensions over Berlin Crisis, 1948-49**
* **Stalin summoned party leaders from Yugoslavia & Bulgaria to Moscow; forced to admit mistakes**
* **Stalin vetoed Yugoslav troops in Albania**
* **Stalin proposed Bulgarian-Yugoslav union; instead of Tito’s federation**
* **Yugoslavia & Bulgaria had to commit themselves to regular consultation with Moscow & Soviet officials in their countries on foreign policy**
* **Tito refused to subordinate foreign policy & rejected union w/Bulgaria**
* **Stalin withdrew advisors from Yugoslavia; accused its leaders of political & ideological crimes; pressured other Soviet bloc states to support USSR**
* **Tito refused to change his position**
* **Yugoslavia’s Communists had a base of support independent from USSR**
* **Tito would manage to keep a great degree of independence for Yugoslavia while maintaining relations w/Soviet bloc countries—Yugoslavia never joined Warsaw Pact**